

New Hampshire Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

April 24, 2012

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP #SPED-2012-8

**New Hampshire Audio Book Services
for Elementary and Secondary School Textbooks**

Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: 4:00pm, Friday, May 18, 2012

An original and four (4) identical copies of a formal proposal shall be submitted to:

Barbara Raymond, Administrative Supervisor
Bureau of Special Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301
Fax: (603) 271-3791
E-mail: Barbara.Raymond@doe.nh.gov

The deadline for receipt of Inquiries is 4:00pm, Wednesday, May 2, 2012. Inquiries must begin with the heading **"New Hampshire Audio Book Services for Elementary and Secondary School Textbooks."** The NHDOE will address written inquiries received by the deadline and if they are determined to be vital to the competitive bidding process, a written response will be sent no later than five (5) working days after the deadline. In addition, any modifications to the specifications contained in this RFP shall be made, in writing by the Department immediately following the deadline for receipt of inquiries and no other changes will be entertained after that date. Verbal agreement or instructions from any source are not authorized or binding on the State of New Hampshire (State).

All advisory committees are encouraged to distribute this Request for Proposals (RFP) to any/all qualified individuals/organizations.

Grant Award:

The Department of Education expects to award a contract to the successful bidder for the period July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2014 upon approval of Governor and Council. The Department anticipates approximately \$100,000.00 will be available annually for this project. In order to be considered for funding, the applicant's proposal must address the following priorities:

Purpose and Priorities:

The purpose of this RFP is to seek proposals from qualified individuals/organizations to work in conjunction with the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE), Bureau of Special Education to provide school districts with audio versions of textbooks and offer an audio lending service to all New Hampshire school districts (K-12) for special education students with certified print disabilities (at no cost to the district). The applicant's proposal must provide outreach and training services to teachers and families in the use of these audio books.

1.0 SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

- 1.1 Coordinate with districts to produce audio versions of textbooks and offer an audio lending service to all New Hampshire school districts (K-12) for special education students with certified print disabilities (at no cost to the district). The audio books can be either synthetic audio format (derived for the federal NIMAC repository) or human speech audio format.
- 1.2 Provide outreach and training services to school districts, students, and families in the use of these audio books.

For more information regarding the National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials at CAST:
<http://aim.cast.org>.

2.0 REPORTING

The successful bidder shall provide the Bureau of Special Education with the following reports:

- 2.1 **Monthly Reporting:** Activity reports to be submitted with each invoice requesting payment that outlines how the project provided and met the purpose and priorities of the project.
- 2.2 **Annual Report:** Report detailing the accomplishments and challenges of the project, based on the evaluation of the project, within 30 days of the end of each project year. The first report will include strategies for improvement. The final report will include a comprehensive overview of the entire project.

3.0 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Upon receiving a contract, the contractor(s) will inform the Department of any conflicts of interest (appearance of, or actual) involving the contracting organization and/or individual staff members (including volunteer staff) prior to accepting the assignment or while engaged in the assignment.

4.0 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 Working knowledge to provide audio versions of textbooks; an audio lending service, and technical assistance to all New Hampshire schools (K-12).
- 4.2 Extensive knowledge and experience in special education.
- 4.3 Expertise and working knowledge regarding the National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials at CAST.
- 4.4 Expertise or working knowledge to provide training and professional development regarding audio lending services.
- 4.5 The ability to assist districts and families with finding resources at the State and federal level regarding audio versions of textbooks and audio lending services.
- 4.6 The ability to work with representatives from State agencies, partner organizations, school districts, and families.
- 4.7 Effective communication skills (oral and written).
- 4.8 Must be able to utilize e-mail, conduct webinars, contribute to a website as forms of communication, and
- 4.9 Leadership and facilitation skills.

5.0 TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 5.1 The State shall not be responsible for or pay for any costs incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 5.2 The Department reserves the right to seek clarification of any information contained in a proposal submitted to this RFP.
- 5.3 The Department reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted in response to this RFP. In addition, the distribution of this RFP shall not commit the State to issue a contract.
- 5.4 If the Department chooses to award contracts in response to this RFP, contracts will be developed by the Department for approval by Governor and Council. The contract shall incorporate, by reference, all provisions of this RFP and the successful bidder's proposal. In preparing a contract with the successful bidder(s), the Department reserves the right to clarify any terms and conditions contained in the proposal.
- 5.5 Public announcements or news releases pertaining to the award of a contract shall not be made until the contract(s) have been approved by Governor and Council.
- 5.6 The State shall not be responsible for any work performed by the successful bidder prior to the effective date of a contract approved by Governor and Council.
- 5.7 Unless otherwise deleted or modified by mutual agreement between the State and the contractor(s), all general provisions contained on page 2 of Form P-37 State Contract shall be incorporated in the contract (see **Attachment A**).
- 5.8 All obligations of the State, including the continuance of payments under an approved contract shall be contingent upon the availability and continued appropriation of State, federal or other funds and in no event shall the State be liable for any payments in excess of such available appropriated funds. In the event of a reduction or termination of those funds, the State shall have the right to withhold payment until such funds become available, if ever, and shall have the right to terminate or amend the contract immediately upon giving the contractor notice of such termination or amendment.
- 5.9 When delivering services under an approved contract, the contractor shall work under the broad supervision of the Department and Contracting Officer for this project.

6.0 Audit

Sec. 80.26 Non-Federal audit.

(a) Basic Rule. Grantees and subgrantees are responsible for obtaining audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C. 7501-7507) and revised OMB Circular A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations." The audits shall be made by an independent auditor in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards covering financial audits.

(b) Subgrantees. State or local governments, as those terms are defined for purposes of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, that provide Federal awards to a subgrantee, which expends \$300,000 or more (or other amount as specified by OMB) in Federal awards in a fiscal year, shall:

(1) Determine whether State or local subgrantees have met the audit requirements of the Act and whether subgrantees covered by OMB Circular A-110, "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit organizations," have met the audit requirements of the Act. Commercial contractors (private for-profit and private and governmental organizations) providing goods and services to State and local governments are not required to have a single audit performed. State and local governments should use their own procedures to ensure that the contractors have complied with laws and regulations affecting the expenditures of Federal funds;

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE AFOREMENTIONED CIRCULARS, GO TO

www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/index.html

7.1 Debarment and Suspension

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION

The bidder/offeror certifies, by submission of this proposal or acceptance of this contract, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency. It further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include this clause without modification in all lower tier transactions, solicitations, proposals, contracts, and subcontracts. Where the bidder/offeror/contractor or any lower tier participant is unable to certify to this statement, it shall attach an explanation to this solicitation/proposal.

8.0 LIMITATIONS ON AMOUNT AND CONTRACT PERIOD

8.1 The Department anticipates that the total cost for all proposed products and services will not exceed \$100,000.00 for the length of the contract.

8.2 The Department expects to award a contract effective July 1, 2012, or Governor & Council approval, whichever is later, to the successful contractor(s). Unless there is a change in the plan requirements and/or services to be delivered, the cost for each individual contract shall not exceed the amount of \$100,000.00.

9.0 Application Procedures

9.1 An original and four (4) identical hard copies of a formal proposal must be received at the Department of Education no later than 4:00pm, Friday, May 18, 2012. Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered for review. Each application shall include a narrative or other directly relevant material as needed to address the areas described in 1.0 and 4.0 of the RFP. The original documents must be submitted unbound and in such a manner as to facilitate photocopying. The maximum number of points that can be awarded for each area during the rating and selection process is shown below.

9.2 This documentation will be evaluated to determine if the candidate has the ability to accomplish the Services to be Provided and meets or exceeds the General Requirements. This evaluation will be based on the candidate's ability to provide evidence of the following criteria: provide outreach and training services to school districts, students, and families in the use of these audio books.

9.2.1 *Significance of Project:* Description of bidder's organization capabilities to deliver the services, including a brief description of their personal experience and/or company's experience in developing and implementing a program of this type; to include references as applicable. Please identify the specific subsections of 4.0 as they are addressed (see 4.0 General Requirements) (10 points):

- 9.2.2 *Quality of Services:* Describe how you will accomplish the Services to be Provided in 1.0 of this RFP, including activities and strategies that will achieve the desired outcomes. Also identify roles, responsibilities and partners to be involved for the various activities/strategies. Please identify the subsection(s) of the Services to be Provided as you address them in your narrative. (30 points total)
- 9.2.2(a) Content knowledge, including but not limited to, knowledge expertise or working knowledge to coordinate with districts to produce audio versions of textbooks and offer an audio lending service to all New Hampshire school districts (K-12) for special education students with certified print disabilities (at no cost to the district). The audio books can be either synthetic audio format (derived for the federal NIMAC repository) or human speech audio format.
- 9.2.2 (b) Technical Skills, including but not limited to: provide media producer services in audio format, provide outreach and training services to school districts, students, and families in the use of these audio books and conduct webinars and provide web access to information.
- 9.2.3 *Management Plan:* Provide a work-plan, timeline, milestones or benchmarks in accordance with the activities to carry out Services to be Provided in 1.0 of this RFP (15 points):
- 9.2.4 *Personnel and Partners:* Provide a listing of the individuals who will have responsibilities within this proposed project, their titles, qualifications and duties, and the amount of time each will devote to the project. Identify key partners, describe their anticipated participation and provide documentation of their commitment. (10 points):
- 9.2.5 *Adequacy of Resources:* Provide a detailed budget, including budget notes/justification, which clearly explains the relationship between proposed activities and expenditures. The budget should be broken down into two (2) fiscal years; FY'13 (July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013) and FY'14 (July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014) and not to exceed \$100,000.00 for each year. Indirect costs may not exceed 8%. (25 points):
- 9.2.6 *Evaluation Plan:* Describe your comprehensive plan for the evaluation of the proposed project's activities, effectiveness and impact (10 points).
- 9.3 In order to provide bidders with the opportunity to present a comprehensive response to the RFP, no page limit has been established. Applicants are reminded that successful applications are typically clear, concise, and well organized. It is strongly recommended that applications be organized around the elements listed in section 1.0 and further addressed in the information packet. Supplementary materials may be submitted as part of the application, however, these should be limited to items that substantively explain or expand upon information presented in the basic application. All supplementary materials should be referenced with the basic application. Four (4) sets of any supplementary material should be submitted.
- 9.4 Qualified applicants may be asked to provide the Department with additional written materials or documentation of qualifications, and may be asked to meet with Department Administrators or their designee to discuss their proposal.
- 9.5 Each bidder shall submit, along with the formal proposal, a completed/signed "Alternate W-9 Form" (see **Attachment B**).
- 9.6 Each bidder shall submit, along with the formal proposal, a completed/signed "Cover Page" (see **Attachment C**).

- 9.7 An original and four (4) identical copies of a formal proposal shall be submitted by 4:00pm, Friday, May 18, 2012 to:

Barbara Raymond
New Hampshire Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

10.0 Evaluation of Proposals

All proposals will be reviewed and rated by an evaluation team appointed by the Commissioner of Education. The Department shall be under no obligation to contact bidders for clarification of their proposals, but it shall reserve the right to do so at any time prior to the award of the contract(s). All proposals received by the deadline will be evaluated based on the Application Procedures outlined in this RFP.

The Department reserves the right to interview applicants with the highest average scores for their proposal, but the Department shall be under no obligation to interview applicants. If the Department conducts an interview, it will be done so by a team who will develop structured questions and scoring criteria that will clarify the applicant's ability to fulfill this RFP.

If the Department chooses to award contract(s) relative to this RFP, it shall be to the responsive and responsible bidders that receives the highest total rating as a result of the proposal evaluation and/or interview process.

Enclosures:
Attachment A: P-37 Contract Form
Attachment B: ALT W-9 Form
Attachment C: Cover Page